DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 324 127 PS 019 106

AUTHOR Tweedie, Pat
TITLE Interactive Bulletin Boards in the Early Childhood Center.
PUB DATE Mar 90
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Southern Association on Children Under Six (41st, Dallas, TX, March 29-April 1, 1990).
AVAILABLE FROM Vanier Institute of the Family, 120 Holland Avenue, Suite 300, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Y 0X6 ($2.00).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Bulletin Boards; Early Childhood Education; Guidelines; *Learning Activities; *Student Role; *Young Children

ABSTRACT

Interactive bulletin boards for early childhood rooms can often be made with supplies and materials used for other games and activities. This paper tells how it can be done. The project is interactive in that children are involved in decisions about the appearance of the completed board. Additional topics of discussion in this paper include traditional uses of bulletin boards, fastening devices for movable pieces, display of movable pieces, storage of materials, sources of bulletin board ideas, and an example of a bulletin board displaying different shapes. It is concluded that once teachers have worked with this presentation method, they will be able to plan a variety of methods for presenting new materials they make. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED324127

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

Interactive Bulletin Boards in the Early Childhood Center

by

Pat Tweedie

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Patricia S. Tweedie

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

RC019106

Interactive Bulletin Boards in the Early Childhood Center

"How do you work this one?" Tasha asked as she studied the pictures displayed on a bulletin board attached to the back of the block shelves. "These are just to look at," the student teacher said. Tasha didn't stay long enough for further conversation. The children in this center were used to having bulletin boards that involved them in an active hands on manner; matching, grouping, seriating, paired common relations tasks and even dramatic play. These were usually based on the units of interest currently being studied at that time. "Just looking at pictures" did not meet this young learner's high standards for use of a bulletin board!

Traditional use of Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards have long been used to display children's work, introduce areas of study, display culminating activities of projects or just to decorate a room. Few have been designed with the child as an active learner in mind in the early childhood center.

Teachers of older children have often used bulletin board displays in learning centers to stimulate reading and writing activities and have involved the children in preparing bulletin boards as a learning activity. These have been referred to as "interactive" as long as children have a part in some decisions as to how the final product will look and/or can interact with each other. (Dungey, 1989, p32) These almost always require that children show some competency in reading.

Bulletin Boards in the Early Childhood Center

Teachers of young children have the additional challenge of providing an "interactive" or "hands on" learning bulletin board in which reading is not required to carry out the tasks. This does not mean that written material does not appear on the board. An interesting question or sentence should always appear in the title, and if appropriate, materials should be labelled and directions written. Children will then have the opportunity of learning to associate the writing with a meaningful task.
But the primary tasks in manipulating and attaching the pieces can be carried out after a brief introduction and demonstration in a circle time or when the board is first displayed.

Bulletin boards are often permanently attached to the wall above a child's eye level in an early childhood center, and may even be placed above cabinets or other furniture as well, making them less accessible and noticeable to children and adults alike.

Many traditionally sized public school classrooms and day care centers are challenged by lack of space for the many activity centers that teachers and caregivers would like to provide for their class. [Teachers are also challenged to provide attractive wall displays to decorate their rooms which may be appealing to the adult, but do not serve the children directly, and the preparation of which takes time away from making materials for the hands on use for the children.] By creatively making use of the vertical space in a room, additional centers can be provided, teacher time will be well spent in providing meaningful activities for her class, and the room will have an attractive appearance.

Creating "Interaction" Bulletin Boards

Any vertical space is a potential bulletin board. Besides those walls prepared especially with bulletin board backing, sides of desks, file cabinets, backs of shelves, walls and room dividers are useable with a few adaptations.

Using standard sized poster board which comes in a great variety of colors provides attractive backgrounds for bulletin boards, which can be secured to surfaces with staples or heavy duty tape, and have the additional advantage of being saved in one piece. The poster board should be laminated after lettering and pictures have been attached to protect it during use. A variety of methods can then be used to attach moveable materials.

Other bulletin board backings can be made of fabric, cork, and carpeting. Some of these will need to be attached firmly to a standard bulletin board background or framing.

Fastening Devices for Moveable Pieces

Attaching materials so that they are moveable can be done in a variety of ways. As a teacher works with the idea of "interaction boards" she will develop some new and creative means herself. New products in sewing, carpentry, and items found at office supply and hardware stores will stimulate new ideas.

Magnetic tape or dots can be attached to the back of a laminated poster board or used directly on steel file cabinets and desks. Placing the magnet on the back of the poster will make a more attractive looking activity board. Magnets are then attached to the pieces which the children handle. If the moveable pieces are made of paper products, they too should be laminated before attaching the magnet. Many magnetic materials can be purchased which lend themselves for use on bulletin boards such as shapes, numbers, letters and animals. The more concrete the pieces, the more attractive young children will find the activity.

Velcro, especially the self sticking variety, provides an additional interest to an interactive bulletin board. Children will need to be taught how to remove the moveable pieces with a side pulling motion.

Library pockets provide a sturdy method of holding materials for the activity or for storage of moveable pieces. These should be taped with strapping tape onto the poster board just below the pocket part and then laminated right onto the the poster. The laminating cover is then slit just above the pocket.

Small self sticking plastic hooks can be attached to laminated surfaces and provide a sturdier means of holding heavier items that might be used, such as dramatic play masks and clothing .

Double sticky tape can be attached to the backs of the moveable pieces if they are of light weight material. These will need to be replaced regularly as the sticky wears off. Just put another piece on top of the old.

Plastic pegs such as those used in peg boards can be used to hang laminated paper materials on when placed in the pegboard holes found on the backs of many shelves. The materials to be hung from these pegs will need to have holes punched in them.

Making transparent pockets from clear acetate folders provides a means of arranging pictures and photographs for a variety of activities, such as in sequencing or grouping of friends, where gluing an attachment on the back is not desired. Using colored acetate pockets can provide a science activity in color mixing, similar to using color paddles. A poster board background of white and placing in good light is recommended for this activity.

A laminated surface is also suitable for children to write upon, using waterbased markers. This can provide a base for a prewriting, premath or creative activity .

A clothesline and clothespins can be used for displaying of items and is ideal for matching activities such as a (real) mitten match, or a paired common relations using doll or children's clothing. Pinching of the clothespins additionally provides for small muscle strengthening and coordination.

Displaying Moveable Pieces

Care needs to be given to how materials will be stored at the center. It is important to make moveable pieces visible, yet neatly arranged so children can see the possiblilities for use.

A large transparent pocket or colorful envelope in which pieces can be easily grasped will hold paper products adequately. Materials which use double sticky tape can have a part of the poster board designed for display of unused items. If magnets are used, the moveable pieces can be displayed on a magnetic strip along the bottom of the board. If three dimensional or bulky items are used, place a basket, hang a decorative "gift wrap bag" or cloth bag, or a contact covered box at the center.

Storage of Materials

If posterboard is used as the bulletin board surface, a large envelope attached to the back can store the moveable pieces. Posters then can be stored in a large architect's envelope. Materials for other bulletin board surfaces can be stored in sealable plastic bags or envelopes which have been labelled.

Sources for Bulletin Board Ideas

Ideally, the bulletin boards should grow out of the interests of the children and the curriculum that the teacher plans for her particular group. These will be the ones the children use the most, especially if pictures of the children and their activities are used. Having a camera at the ready for school activities, field trips and visitors will personalize units of study. When these are used in a language experience story and then later transferred to a "sequencing" interaction bulletin board, concepts not only will be reinforced, but the subject matter will be used as a vehicle for a vertical learning activity. (Hendricks,1980, p. 256) In addition, such pictures will lend themselves to a class-authored book for the reading corner when the bulletin board is taken down. A creative teacher will learn to use her materials in many ways.

Many bulletin board resource books will have useful suggestions on organizing materials, lettering, borders and patterns to enlarge. Many of the bulletin board ideas will adapt to an Early Childhood "hands on" approach.

Example of a "Shape" Bulletin Board

As with any appropriate material presentation in an early childhood center, bulletin boards should allow for and encourage children to work with the materials in as open ended a manner as possible. They should use the materials in the way that meets their learning needs. An example of a "shape " bulletin board will explain how several children used the materials in their own particular way.

The bulletin board surface had three intersecting circle rims in black as well as a rather large blank space. The small square, triangle, circle and rectangle shapes were red, blue and yellow. and were displayed under their respective name. Double sticky tape was the means of attachment which allowed children to move the materials in any way they thought best. Some children classified by color or shape in the circles. Some older children attempted to classify according to two characteristics in the intersections. Others built colorful structures with the shapes in the blank area. One child even made faces out of the circles. And some children enjoyed methodically replacing the shapes under their headings in the "display" area. With the exception of introducing the board in a circle time and reviewing some rules for care and sharing, the children were independent in its use . The teacher removed the board after two weeks as interest began to wane.

In summary, interactive bulletin boards for early childhood rooms can often be made with supplies and materials used for other games and activities. Once a teacher works with this presentation method, she will be able to plan how new materials she makes can be presented in a variety of ways including interactive bulletin boards.

References:

Dungey, Joan M. (1989). Interactive Bulletin Boards As Teaching Tools Washington, D.C.: National Education Association.

Hendrick, Joanne. (1980). The Whole Child; New Trends in Early Education. St. Louis, Missouri: C.V. Mosby Company.

Resources:

Involvement Bulletin Boards. (1970). Washington D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International.

Mac Linker, Jerry. (1973). Instructional Display Boards. Austin Texas: Visual Instruction Bureau.

Wilmes, Liz, & Moehling, Vohny. (1988). Everyday Bulletin Boards. Elgin Illinois: Building Blocks. (available from Gryphon House Inc. P.O. Box 275, Mt. Rainier Maryland, 20712).